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REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 6-7 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Harrington. Claims 2-3 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Harrington in view of Japan 2002-275615. Claims 4 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Harrington in view of Spitsberg. Claim 5 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 13-31 are allowed.

The applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter. Claim 5 is placed into independent form herein, thereby overcoming the objection and placing claim 5 into condition for allowance.

Claim 1 has been amended to add the limitation that the first constituent comprises "stabilized" zirconia particles. Harrington teaches away from this limitation by specifying that "the subparticles of zirconium oxide must not be previously stabilized with the yttrium oxide." (column 3, lines 64-66. See also column 4, lines 14-17 and column 4, lines 49-50.) Harrington requires unstabilized zirconia because he is attempting to achieve a complete solution of all oxide constituents. (column 4, lines 4-6)

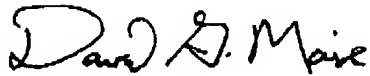
Further, the Examiner correctly notes that Harrington teaches that it is desirable for the coating to be fully melted on application. Accordingly, all of the examples of Harrington utilize a plasma spray process. While Harrington does state that a flame spray process may be used, he must necessarily be speaking of a high velocity oxy-fuel (HVOF) process, since he requires that all of the particles be melted to form a complete solution. Thus, Harrington also teaches away from the claim 1 limitation of "using the low velocity oxygen fuel process to apply the composite powder to a surface." The coating of the present invention contains splats of melted material surrounding and encasing unmelted or partially unmelted particles, as illustrated in FIG. 2 of the present application, and in direct contrast to the complete solution of Harrington.

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Thus, amended claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-4 and 6-12 are novel and nonobvious over the cited prior art and are in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration of the amended application in light of the above amendment and Remarks and allowance of claims 1-21 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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